Health and Family Welfare Minister urged the State Health Ministers to strengthen the drug control machinery with the object of putting down production, distribution and sale of substandard and spurious drugs.

Drugs for Health Care

@2453-C. DR. R. K. PODDAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to a World Health Organisation proclamation only 200 drugs were enough for health care in a country;

(b) if so, whether Government concurs with the view of the WHO;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the number of drugs in circulation in the country at present?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) The WHO Expert Committee on selection of Essential Drugs in series 722 of 1985 has indicated about 285 basic drugs and about 358 single ingredient formulations which are considered as most needed for the health care of the population.

(b) and (c). As per W.H.O., such a model list should be understood as a tentative identification of "Common care" of basic needs. This list, however, does not cover all the local needs of each country. Such a list has to be modified by the health authorities of each country taking into account changing priorities in the field of public health and epidemiological conditions as well as progress made in the field of Therapeutics.

So far as India is concerned a list of essential drugs which are required for use in the Primary Health Centres as well as by the Community Health Guide has been prepared. This list of drugs used in these Centres is even more restrictive than that indicated in the WHO list.

(d) As the State Drug Control Authorities are the licensing authorities for the grant of permission to manufacture and market the drug formulations in the country, it would not be possible for us to indicate the exact number of drug formulations that are in circulation in the country at present.

Production of Harmful drugs

@@2453-D. SHRI RAMACHANDRA BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the PTI report dated December 14, 1985, quoting the Bangladeshi Magsasay Award winner Dr. Zafarulla Choudhary to the effect that more than 10,000 of the 15,000 basic drugs produced in India were worthless and that nearly 40 per cent of them were either harmful or potentially harmful; and

(b) if so, what specific steps have been taken or are being taken to standardise the drugs and to prevent the manufacture of illicit drugs?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) No, Sir. It is not a fact that more than 66 per cent of the basic drugs produced in India are worthless and nearly 40 per cent of them are either harmful or potentially harmful.

(b) Does not arise.

@Previously Unstarred Question 2004 transferred from the 17th March, 1986.

@@Previously Unstarred Question 2008 transferred from the 17th March, 1986.